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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 14 December 1992, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. MONGBE (Benin)
(Vice-President)

- The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina: report of the Secretary-General [143]

- Programme of work

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Mongbe (Benin), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 143

THE SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/747)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before calling on the first speaker in the debate, I should like to propose that the list of speakers be closed tomorrow at 11 a.m. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names as soon as possible.

Mr. SACIRBEY (Bosnia and Herzegovina): The foremost responsibility of any Government towards its citizens is to protect them from external and internal threats to their safety. Some who have gained influence over the affairs of our Republic may be underestimating the importance of, or even ignoring, this most fundamental responsibility.

No one should seek to promote solutions for our Republic without placing primary emphasis on this responsibility. Certainly we, as the legitimate Government of our Republic, have to undertake all necessary steps to fulfil this responsibility. We must take steps with - hopefully with but, if necessary, without - the requisite and appropriate help from organs of the international community.

Unfortunately, the safety of our citizens cannot be assured by simple pronouncements of principle. Principles must be enforced. Constitutional

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frameworks proposed in Geneva will not protect our citizens in Sarajevo unless they are implemented. Ultimatums to aggressors and criminals are futile unless they are backed by the force of law. Regrettably, courageous attemps to feed our people and to deliver the basic necessities of life do not address the core threat to their safety.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to travel back to my Republic and to my capital. The impressions of Sarajevo that remain with me are vivid and varied: immense, indiscriminate destruction; cold; hunger; dignity and resolve; the constant awareness of one's mortality; the overwhelming level of control and authority that the United Nations and other international forces have over our people's lives and their future.

Every aspect of my trip to Sarajevo had to be approved and scheduled by United Nations personnel. Our people had become almost totally dependent on the flow of relief supplies from the outside. The flow of relief, despite the goodwill and brave efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other personnel, was insufficient and was regularly and readily blocked by those practising "ethnic cleansing" on our population. The United Nations forces were absorbed in their existing mandates, and they exercised substantial authority and discretion in pursuit of their humanitarian mission.

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Unfortunately, the one mandate that the United Nations forces had not undertaken, and which was clearly not evident in practice, was the defence of our people from aggression. This conflicting and unfortunate strategy has left our citizens exposed to bombs and bullets, even while they are waiting in line to receive distributions of aid from United Nations-sponsored relief efforts.

Clearly though, our Government does not have the option, and cannot avoid the most basic mandate of its citizens to defend them. For us, the issue of self-defence is not an academic consideration or one of theoretical implications to be debated in Geneva. It is clear that, without the active and unwavering protection of our defence forces, our citizens would have suffered an even worse fate than what they have already experienced. As the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, has stated

> "Ethnic cleansing does not appear to be the consequences of the war, but rather its goal." (A/47/635, para. 6)

Under such conditions, delivery of humanitarian relief is desperately needed and greatly appreciated, but it does not adequately address the threat to our people's physical survival.

Some may be of the view that the defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina is on the verge of collapse. This has been a view whispered and then echoed since May. It is time that this morally and politically flawed view be forever placed to rest. We may be underarmed and defensively positioned. However, we can assure members that our will and commitment remain unshaken.

What remains unclear is the extent to which we will be able to stop the deliberate, indiscriminate and unabated targeting of our civilians. The

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impact of the arms embargo on our Republic's defence forces is clearly contrary to the interest of our people and their survival.

Standard, manipulative and trite commentary that more arms in Bosnia and Herzegovina will result in more violence has to be compared to the reality as so clearly perceived and related by the Special Rapporteur:

> "Another factor which has contributed to the intensity of the ethnic cleansing in areas under Serbian control is the marked imbalance between the weaponry in the hands of the Serbian and the Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina." (A/47/666, para. 14)

Are we to continue to be subjected to cynical responses and to the options of those who have privately written off the people and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a lost cause?

To quote an editorial from yesterday's New York Times:

> "The West's faint efforts in Bosnia - refusing to arm Muslims for self-defense, but not defending them ourselves; banning Serbian flights over Bosnia, but not enforcing the ban; denying asylum to refugees, but failing to establish safe havens for them within Bosnia - amount to unconscionable cynicism."

The destiny of Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be decided by those who, while expressing sympathy, believe it to be a lost cause, or worse, by those who view it as an unfortunate and tragic situation that is too dangerous to confront in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but that must be contained like a cancer and kept from spreading elsewhere. These views are flawed in two ways. First, they demonstrate a lack of sincere concern for the welfare of our citizens, a concern that we cannot ignore. Secondly, the disease in our

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country did not originate in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It came from the outside. It can only be dealt with by addressing the source and saving the victim.

It is largely left to the discretion of the international community as to how, or even if, it confronts the source. It is up to us, hopefully, with the assistance of the international community, to remedy it in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We will not allow our Republic to become another Sudetenland and our citizens to become the victims of a new holocaust.

Mr. ERDŐS (Hungary) (interpretation from French): Four months have elapsed since the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When it was adopted, the resolution expressed the position and demands of the States Members of the United Nations on this subject, inter alia, immediate cessation of any foreign intervention, respect for territorial integrity and condemnation of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Since the adoption of that resolution, the Security Council adopted, in turn, several resolutions and presidential statements on the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, and more particularly on Bosnia and Herzegovina. In those documents, the body that has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security pronounced a severe judgement on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The seriousness of this state of affairs has thus never escaped the eye of the United Nations and the Security Council. But today, on the occasion of this discussion in the Assembly on the implementation of its resolution adopted last August, we must note with deep bitterness and growing alarm that the resolutions adopted by the General

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Assembly and the Security Council continue to be deliberately disregarded. Similarly, the decisions taken by the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia - a forum that was set up to serve as the framework for a lasting political settlement to the conflict - have also not been enforced.

It can be said with no exaggeration that to address the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a blot on the honour of Europe and the entire world. The spectacle we are witnessing today in the former Yugoslavia is reminiscent of the darkest and most shameful pages of mankind's history. And it is particularly troubling to see all this taking place in a Europe which, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, has finally been able to overcome its divisions and its antagonisms and to embark on the establishment of a free, democratic and united continent. It is difficult to accept that the scourge of a new war this time will inflict on the peoples of the former Yugoslavia untold sufferings, which we had hoped never again to experience.

The events that are taking place today in Bosnia and Herzegovina are in gross violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We are convinced that the United Nations cannot tolerate the trampling underfoot with impunity of the values on which the world Organization is based.

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It is therefore important that the international community act with determination against those who violate the Charter, who deliberately disregard the most fundamental norms of international law and show so little regard for Security Council resolutions. The sending by the international forums concerned of suitable messages, which measure up to the challenge, is of particular importance for Central and Eastern Europe.

Serbian nationalism and its regular and irregular forces must bear the primary responsibility for the outbreak of the bloody crisis now tearing asunder the territory of the former Yugoslavia and for its spread to new regions of the former Federation. The purpose of the series of aggressions that have been committed, whether admitted or not, remains the same: the establishment of an ethnically "pure" nation-State, of "homogeneous", contiguous territories established by means of territorial conquest and "ethnic cleansing". It was not by mere chance that the Security Council was so firm in its latest resolution on Bosnia and Herzegovina, when it affirmed that any entities unilaterally declared or arrangements imposed in contravention of the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina would not be accepted.

Hungary believes that in condemning such aspirations as vigorously as possible the international community must reject, isolate and bring to justice those who have initiated and sponsored this policy. Such actions cannot be justified by any type of ideology or by any goal including that of protecting an ethnic community or a national minority. The establishment of nation States cannot be an answer to the need to protect national minorities. At the end of the twentieth century, such a path can only lead to tension and crises, and, in the final analysis, to bloody conflicts in relations between the

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nations involved, as has so clearly been demonstrated in the modern history of Europe.

Hungary is just as firm in rejecting efforts to create nation States as it is in its total support for the protection of the individual and collective rights of national minorities. This applies to the rights of Serbs in Croatia as well as to those of Albanians in Kosovo and in Sandjak, of Hungarians in Vojvodina, and all other national minorities, wherever they may live in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a Member State of the United Nations and it participates in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Our world Organization cannot allow once again, following an act of aggression, a fully fledged member of the community of nations to disappear from the map. It is easy to see the incalculable consequences that might result from the acceptance of faits accomplis and the application of a policy of appeasement.

Hungary supports the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We stand at the side of the Muslims, Croats and Serbs who have joined together in the heroic struggle to safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of their homeland. Hungary also welcomes the acceptance by the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina of the constitutional principles for the country proposed by the two Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

One of the most disturbing aspects of the crisis is the humanitarian situation in the country, a situation with no equal on the European continent since the Second World War. While we are aware that humanitarian efforts are not sufficient of themselves to bring about a political settlement of the

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crisis, we feel that practical considerations must now be to the fore, so that human lives can be saved and millions of displaced persons and refugees can be helped. One method - though admittedly temporary - would be to establish, under United Nations auspices, safe areas for humanitarian purposes in various regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We await with interest the conclusions of the study that the Secretary-General has been asked to carry out on this subject.

Despite innumerable agreements, resolutions, decisions, commitments, declarations and arrangements, the efforts of the international community to halt the aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina have remained ineffective. We feel that the time has come for the United Nations to act with renewed vigour and energy and with much more determination. To do that, it must draw on the lessons of the past and devise new ways to take action in order finally to put an end to the carnage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to reverse in all areas the consequences of that aggression, and to bring to reason those who, flouting international opinion, methodically continue their merciless attacks against what remains of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in pursuit of their apparently insatiable expansionist ambitions.

Against that background, the siege of Sarajevo, the capital of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is particularly disturbing. The aggressors must weigh all the serious consequences of their assault on this important European city, symbol of a historically harmonious coexistence between different ethnic and religious communities. The firm measures that the United Nations adopted very recently in another context might serve as a catalyst in the process of considering how the United Nations is to fulfil its

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obligation to maintain international peace and security. We feel that we have something to inspire us. The question is whether we have the necessary determination.

Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia): The Malaysian position on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was clearly spelled out in the debate at the resumed forty-sixth session of the General Assembly in August and, more recently, at the Security Council meeting on 13 November 1992. My delegation is speaking today to reiterate our stand; we are increasingly concerned at the absence of virtually any effective action to stop the slaughter, rape and bloodletting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Words are becoming ineffective, if not futile, in seeking ways to stop the horrors in that region. The media feed us graphically a daily diet of unspeakable crimes that border more and more on savagery, all of them happening not in some area of darkness in a third-world region, but in Europe, the so-called cradle of Western values and civilization, with claims to be the foundation of modern institutions and thought processes.

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While Malaysia has supported all the efforts undertaken by the United Nations and the European Community, the situation on the ground clearly calls for resolute and decisive action within the framework of collective security and responsibility. The most recent reports of indiscriminate bombardments of Sarajevo, causing further loss of life and material damage and endangering the United Nations Protection Force and international relief workers, indicate further acts of defiance of the London Peace Accords or Security Council resolutions.

It is clear that the Serbs are not satisfied with the more than 70 per cent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina which they have already seized. "Ethnic cleansing" and the brutalization of Bosnians continue. Already more than 128,000 Bosnians have been killed and some 1.8 million - or about 40 per cent of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina - have been listed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as displaced persons. The latest attacks on Sarajevo and its suburbs, which coincided with Serbian offers for free passage for the people to leave the city, can only be read as an attempt to exert additional pressure and to make living in Sarajevo even more unbearable. In such circumstances, the United Nations must accept the fact that military intervention is inevitable in the face of determined Serbian aggression. If ever such intervention were justified, it is now.

Malaysia and the other countries members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) are absolutely convinced that the time has come for the Security Council to authorize the use of all necessary means by Member States, in cooperation with the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to put an end to the Serbian aggression. Any further delay in taking measures

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effectively to stop the Serbians in their rampage is inconceivable at a time when the Balkan region is being ignited to threaten international peace and security and when acts of unparalleled savagery are being committed.

How do we retain any measure of faith and confidence in the London Conference and what it was supposed to do? A similar question can also be asked of the Security Council. The Serbs have continuously reneged on their many pledges to observe a cease-fire, to turn over their heavy artillery to international supervision and to stop military flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is no doubt that the Security Council ban on Serbian military flights over that country has been constantly violated by Serbia, since there is no enforcement by the United Nations of the ban. In fact, the Serbians have made a mockery of Security Council resolution 781 (1992); the functions of the United Nations personnel under that resolution have been reduced merely to observing and counting the number of violations.

For several months now the United Nations and the European Community have been dealing with the symptoms rather than the causes of the misery inflicted on the Bosnian population, trying to feed the beleaguered but not squarely addressing the issue of aggression. While the former is necessary, surely there is no way now to avoid taking specific, decisive steps. These steps are known and have been defined. The Bosnians must be given the right to arms. The flight ban must be enforced. Serbian military targets and areas of forward attack must be bombed. Safe havens must be immediately established. Those are some of the possible actions that can be taken. The argument that these actions cannot be taken because they will lead to greater conflagration is unacceptable and morally indefensible.

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Malaysia strongly condemns all violations of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly the policy and practices of "ethnic cleansing"; designed to alter the demographic composition of areas captured by Serbs and aimed at creating a fait accompli leading to the annexation of territories by force. The Security Council has taken the decision to establish a commission to investigate crime, atrocities and "ethnic cleansing", and the time has come for the Council to take concrete follow-up action by establishing a tribunal now to indict and try the perpetrators.

Malaysia feels very strongly about the repeated appeals by the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina to allow his country to defend itself against Serbian aggression. Bosnia and Herzegovina should be exempted from the United Nations arms embargo. My delegation joins the appeal of the OIC countries that the Security Council lift immediately the arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina and restore its right to individual and collective self-defence. Lifting the arms embargo has become a necessity: it is the only means to equalize to some extent the relative strength of the Bosnians and to compel the aggressor forces to negotiate in good faith and abide by their commitments. Inaction by the Security Council in the circumstances would be tantamount to a "do-nothing" policy and would put the lives of many more Bosnians at the mercy of the Serbian forces.

Our debate today must also pay attention to the rising tension in a number of areas with a non-Serb majority within Serbia, in particular Kosovo, Vojvodina and Sanjak, as well as in Macedonia. There are alarming prospects of Serbian use of force and violence in these areas that could lead to a wider regional conflagration, further threatening international peace and security. Malaysia welcomes the decision of the Security Council to deploy United

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Nations peace-keeping forces to Macedonia as a preventive measure. Similar action should be taken with respect to other areas.

The world cannot remain indifferent. There are lessons of the past that remind us of how dearly humanity has paid because of political impassivity. While the decisions are extremely difficult to make, the international community cannot tolerate the brutalization of people and the dismemberment of a nation. Recently the United States Government, with the approval of the Security Council, took important steps in Somalia, which the Malaysian Government fully supports. We praise the United States for this commitment. We want the United States and Europe to do all that must be done for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the end of this debate we shall adopt a draft resolution that will contain an even larger list of what desperately needs to be done for Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation, with others, assisted in preparing the draft resolution. But even as we persist in this direction, as we must, we are beginning to despair about whether decisive steps will really, truly be taken to stop the Serbs in their tracks. A question may be asked whether on the issue of Bosnia and Herzeogovina the United Nations, including the Security Council, has been reduced to producing paper admonitions. Cynicism is beginning to creep in. If there are no strategic interests to defend or strategic resources to guarantee access to, does that mean that the commitment must be less on the part of those that have the ability to take action? What is happening with respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina is a roll-back of standards and values.

The savagery and the horrible deeds being committed in that part of Europe raise questions for Europe and the Western countries. How can one

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summarily pronounce on human rights infractions in far-off places and take Governments to task on issues that pale in comparison with the horrors being continuously committed in a corner of Europe when, in the latter case, one retreats from one's responsibilities? Certain Muslim countries too - those that could generously open up their funds and resources to help Bosnia and Herzegovina - should do more. Malaysia is ready to play its part. The Government of Malaysia has made several commitments to Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are prepared to commit troops to any United Nations enforcement action. Our people have opened up their hearts and homes to displaced Bosnians and orphaned children. A fund for Bosnia and Herzegovina outside the Government efforts now stands at $2 million.

As we come to the end of 1992, in a festive season of communion with all humanity, we do ourselves and our values much damage if we cannot collectively remove the blot on humanity in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. NOBILO (Croatia): It took the world several long years truly to understand the real meaning of the fascism which arose in Europe in the late 1930s. Too much time passed before the Allied forces and democratic anti-fascist movements jointly defeated fascism at the cost of millions of lives and the total destruction of innumerable towns and villages. Flying the flag of victory, we believed that the powerful message of the Holocaust would for ever echo "Never again" in the minds of new generations. Unfortunately, the tragedy in the Balkans has proved that our hopes remain unfulfilled.

It is a well known but sad truth that those who do not want to learn from history are destined to repeat it. In the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Croatia today, we are not only witnessing the same Chamberlain-like policy of indulgence and political short-sightedness in underestimating the main danger to European peace and security in the post-cold-war era, but we are also frightened by the bewildering coincidence of this historic comparison. We have to ask ourselves whether there is really any difference between Hitler's expansionist theory of Blut und Boden and Milosevic's claim that "all Serbs have to live in one State". What is "ethnic cleansing" but the implementation of the genocidal Nazi ideology of the extermination of all non-members of the "superior race"? Who can tell the difference between the siege of Leningrad and the siege of Sarajevo, or between the levelling of Guernica and the levelling of Vukovar? Do we need to argue about the differences in brutality and sick-minded imagination in the torture of innocents when we compare the never-forgotten Nazi death factories and the present Serbian death camps?

It is more and more evident that the appeals for peaceful negotiations, the cautious peace-keeping and the limited humanitarian aid will not solve any

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of the problems in the territory of former Yugoslavia. On the contrary, the Serbian side has misused the good will of the international negotiators, achieving most of its military goals in its aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina. It cost thousands of lives, the destruction of large parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and almost 2 million refugees for it finally to be realized that diplomacy and power must go hand in hand if we are truly determined to bring an end to the so-called Yugoslav crisis. The main dilemma we are facing today is no longer whether the international community should use force, but when and how this should be done to enforce the peace at the minimum cost in lives.

The international community, and the United Nations in particular, are obliged to protect every Member State against brutal international aggression. In this particular case, there are much more than moral reasons and reasons based on provisions of the United Nations Charter to do so. Allow me to summarize the most important reasons for joint international action to stop Serbian aggression.

First, if Serbian aggression is not stopped and reversed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia, fighting will very soon spread across Macedonia, Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina, automatically inflaming the whole of eastern Europe.

Secondly, the continuing extermination of Bosnian Muslims, Muslims in Sandjak and Muslim Albanians in Kosovo will drag the most radical Islamic elements into the conflict, to an extent beyond all control, turning the fighting against Serbian aggression into a vicious religious war in the very heart of Europe.

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Thirdly, any attempt to recognize or even tolerate the fruits of the Serbian aggression will send a dangerously encouraging message to militant nationalistic and totalitarian forces all over eastern Europe, thus shaking the fragile foundations of ethnically complex post-communist societies.

Fourthly, even limited success by Serbian nationalists in the former Yugoslavia would create a further shift to the extreme right on the political scene all over Europe, which is already infected by a new wave of xenophobia and aggressive hatred towards foreigners.

Fifthly, the continuation of Serbian aggression will cause a rise in the tide of refugees and send millions of people all over Europe and beyond, creating a humanitarian catastrophe of unbearable proportions.

Sixthly, some radical political and militant elements could prevail in the vulnerable young democratic societies in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, threatening to bring about the "Lebanonization" of the whole region.

Those who oppose surgical military intervention against the Serbian aggressor argue about the ostensible invincibility of the Serbian fighters. The only "military skill" the Serbian fighters have shown in this war so far has been in the siege and barbarous bombardment of unprotected cities and the slaughter of innocent, unarmed civilians. If we look back into history, we will see that the Chetniks and other Serbian nationalist forces were not usually among those who fought bravely against the invaders. On the contrary, they collaborated with German forces during the Second World War and started to change sides when the Red Army entered Serbia in 1944. Those who proved their valiant bravery were the fathers and grandfathers of those who are now being massacred by Serbian insurgents and who are fighting with rifles and

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stones against Yugoslav army armour. After all, the Croatian army and the people of Croatia have proved that the creators of "Greater Serbia" can be stopped and that the forces of justice can prevail.

It is time to end the myth about Serbian military might and to launch joint international military action under the United Nations umbrella. That appears to be the only way to bring an end to the tragedy in the Balkans. The price of prolonging this agony is far greater than the risks involved. The risks, indeed, are not nearly as high as some are trying to portray them, since an isolated Serbia, with the burden of international sanctions, is not a super-Power able to impose its will on the rest of the world. Even the Soviet Union, with its military strength and its control of half the world, was not able to preserve a parallel international system.

In our effort to solve the crisis, we need to take strong measures in Croatia as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mandate of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the Republic of Croatia must be strengthened in such a way as to include enforcing the control of Croatia's international borders with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and disarming the remaining Serbian paramilitary units in the United Nations protection areas. Our primary goal must be to secure the safe return of all the refugees and detainees and to implement a precise plan for the reintegration and reconstruction of the occupied areas of the Republic of Croatia, as was proposed in the letter dated 9 December 1992 from the President of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Franjo Tudjman, addressed to the President of the Security Council.

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The role of United Nations peace forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina is even more complex because it requires a substantial force, strong enough to impose the precise implementation of all the relevant Security Council resolutions, including the ban on all military flights, the cutting off of supplies to the Serbian rebels in Bosnia and Herzegovina from Serbia and Montenegro, and the provision of safeguards for humanitarian corridors across Bosnia and Herzegovina. We think that establishing safe havens for the refugees is of the utmost importance and is the only possible way to save thousands of women and children during the harsh winter that has just started.

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The majority of the ground forces needed to reach these goals can be acquired through lifting the arms embargo against Muslim and Croatian governmental forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The selective lifting of the arms embargo is not only a question of giving the victim the legitimate right to self-defence, but it is also the answer to the question of where to find enough manpower to stop the Serbian aggression. The Republic of Croatia is ready to assist in this effort if required.

Concerning the status of Croatian forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we welcome the formation of the joint command and coordination of the defence efforts between Croatian and Muslim forces. Some recent unwelcome incidents between these forces in some areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been overcome and ironed out. The future role of some units of the regular army of the Republic of Croatia which are present in certain border areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be strictly regulated through the already existing defence agreements between the two countries and with the full approval of the Government in Sarajevo.

The international community has to assume responsibility for the political stabilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the reconstruction of war-torn areas in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Post-war confidence-building and security arrangements in the region, following the newly emerging concept of European collective security, are the framework for peace and prosperity in this part of Europe.

There can be no substantial reform of the United Nations system or building of the effective multilateral diplomacy in the post-cold-war period without a strengthening of the role of the peacemaking and peace-keeping process all around the world. We must go beyond the existing concept of peace

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mediation and peace-keeping, which for a long time served the purpose of preserving the bipolar balance, to a more comprehensive, elastic and coercive commitment of the international community to deal with regional and local crises. Allow me to quote Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who addressed the same question of revitalization of the United Nations in his article published recently in the journal Foreign Affairs:

> "UN troops would be authorized to use force to ensure respect for the ceasefire. They would be trained, armed and equipped accordingly; a very rapid response would be essential." ("Empowering the United Nations", Foreign Affairs, Winter 1992, p. 94)

Croatia welcomes the noble aims of the present military actions in Somalia, hoping that it is a watershed for the new approach in safeguarding international peace and security. Let the former Yugoslavia be the model for dealing jointly with even bigger violations of international law and humanitarian norms. Let Bosnia be a turning-point at which we loudly and for ever say, "Never again!" In doing so, we must also bring all those found responsible for war crimes and genocide to international justice. We do not need any more words. We need action and determination.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): When this Assembly considered the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in August, it did so on the eve of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in London. High hopes were placed on this Conference, and in a resolution - 46/242 - supported by an overwhelming majority the General Assembly stated a number of principles and demands. Since then the Security Council, for its part, has also adopted a number of relevant resolutions and decisions, in particular resolution 770 (1992) calling on States to take all measures necessary to facilitate

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humanitarian assistance; resolution 771 (1992), condemning any violations of any humanitarian law, including "ethnic cleansing"; resolution 777 (1992), on the status of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the United Nations; resolution 780 (1992), on the establishment of a Commission of Experts on violations of international humanitarian law; resolution 781 (1992), establishing a ban on military flights in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and resolution 787 (1992), imposing further sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro as a consequence of their continuing violation of previous decisions by the Council and inviting the Secretary-General to study the possibility of, and the requirements for, the promotion of safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today we are meeting again on the eve an international gathering, that of the expanded Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, to be held at the ministerial level on 16 December in Geneva. This is, therefore, a welcome opportunity to take stock, as it were, of events since August. The balance sheet presents, I am sorry to say, a depressing picture. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has gone from bad to worse. A major calamity has turned into a catastrophe. Where there may have been a glimmer of hope there is now almost nothing but the black abyss of despair.

Scores of innocent civilians have since been driven from their ancestral homes. Thousands of Muslim women and girls have been raped by the Serb militia, which has made systematic rape one of their means of warfare. Untold numbers have been maimed or killed in cowardly, dastardly attacks. But those who are still alive may soon envy their dead. With the onset of winter, hundreds of thousands more are threatened by exposure and starvation.

A comparison between what the international community has demanded in General Assembly resolution 46/242 of 27 August 1992 and what continues to

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

happen in Bosnia and Herzegovina clearly shows the lack of compliance on the part of the Serbian leadership. "Ethnic cleansing" not only continues, but also threatens to extend to the capital, Sarajevo, itself, prompting the statement by the President of the Security Council at the 3146th meeting, on 9 December 1992 expressing alarm at reports that the Serb militia in Bosnia and Herzegovina is forcing the inhabitants of Sarajevo to evacuate the city. No return of refugees and displaced persons has been possible. Hosilities continue unabated, aided and abetted by Belgrade. The Serb militia continues to flout the repeated demands to disband or disarm or be subject to the authority of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ban on military flights is observed only in its numerous breaches. The safety of humanitarian assistance is not being ensured; on the contrary, there have been numerous instances when the Serbian side interfered with humanitarian convoys, preventing them from reaching their destinations.

This list of violations goes on and on. Decisions regarding measures to ensure compliance will have to be taken elsewhere. But the General Assembly has, none the less, as the conscience of the international community, an important role to play. It can warn, it can demand, and it can condemn. It can formulate basic principles, and it should do so again. In giving voice to a cri de coeur about the nightmare now engulfing Bosnia and Herzegovina, it will again live up to its responsibilities. This Assembly may not be able to do more, but it should certainly not do any less.

Mr. JAYA (Brunei Darussalam): The deteriorating situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina presents each and every one of us here, as well as this body, with a fundamental and real challenge. The brutalities perpetrated against the Bosnian population compel us to take immediate and decisive action. We cannot remain passive while those daily atrocities continue unabated. There is a clear absence of reason and humanity on the part of those committing those abhorrent crimes.

For eight months now, the Bosnian people have been subjected to a level of brutality not witnessed in Europe since the end of the Second World War. In particular, we were shocked by the Serbian policy of "ethnic cleansing", forcing the Muslims and Croats to leave their homes. The existence of concentration camps and detention centres in the Serbian-controlled areas is further proof of the extent of gross and systematic violations of human rights. This genocide and crime against humanity must be stopped, and we want to see that those who are guilty of these crimes are punished. This is our common moral responsibility. However, my delegation hopes that the current and conditional cease-fire will ultimately facilitate the process of the return of Bosnian refugees to their homes in conditions of safety and honour.

Brunei Darussalam is deeply committed to the principle of sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. We view what is happening now in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an outrageous attempt to undermine that very principle. It is a brutal effort to deprive the majority in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the freedom to express their right to self-determination. We must ensure that such a bigoted policy will not succeed.

We cannot but feel outrage at the sheer arrogance of the Serbian forces in blatantly disregarding international efforts undertaken by the United

(Mr. Jaya, Brunei Darussalam)

Nations and the European Community. These forces have continued to defy the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as those adopted in other international forums. The reports on Serbian violations of the ban on military flights in the airspace of Bosnia and Herzegovina suggest that the relevant resolutions remain ineffective. The recent attacks on the United Nations Protection Force in Sarajevo by the Serbian forces is a clear example of their flagrant indifference to international opinion and pressure.

There is now an urgent need for effective action to ensure the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The international community must take formal measures. The United Nations in particular must undertake this task if it is to defend its cherished principles. We therefore welcome the willingness shown by the Security Council to consider efforts towards that end.

In this respect, Brunei Darussalam urges the Security Council to consider lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a view to enabling the Bosnians to defend themselves and preventing the Serbs from totally dictating the outcome of the conflict. At the same time, my delegation fully supports any effort to get all parties to sit at the negotiating table in search of a political settlement.

The suffering and hardships experienced by the Bosnians have gone on unabated for far too long. We have witnessed with total indignation the inhumane acts perpetrated against innocent women and children, the young and the elderly. My delegation calls upon the international community to take full measures in order to halt this ruthless action against a sovereign and independent nation and its people.

Mr. SAMHAN (United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the United Arab Emirates to extend to the Secretary-General our thanks and appreciation for his report on the situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (A/47/747), which highlights the nature and gravity of the crisis, with all its security, social and economic dimensions. It is in the light of that report that the General Assembly of the United Nations takes up once again the question of the Serbian aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Some, indeed a few, had hoped that the successive resolutions adopted by the Security Council regarding that aggression were going to deter the State of Serbia and Montenegro and cause it to abandon its aggressive policies and halt the inhuman practices that have been condemned by the entire international community and which it pursues relentlessly against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the predictions of others, indeed of the majority, that the aggressor State was not going to respond to the international will and was not going to desist from aggression, have been borne out by the facts. The reason for that is the inadequacy of those resolutions which deal generally and specifically with the humanitarian aspects and do not address the core of the problem, which is the need to halt the aggression and put a stop to the inhuman practices, which run counter to the United Nations Charter and to the most rudimentary norms and principles that govern international relations.

In the light of these facts and realities, any assessment of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the General Assembly and any resolution adopted in this regard must reflect and project forcefully the collective will of the international community as a whole.

(Mr. Samhan, United Arab Emirates)

The position of the United Arab Emirates regarding the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was recently expressed unambiguously and clearly by His Excellency Sheik Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahian, the Head of State, in commending the international efforts to rescue the fraternal people of Somalia from starvation and to put an end to that people's plight, when he said:

"The positive initiative in Somalia imposes on the international community the duty to mobilize the same will and determination to put an end to the plight of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, because if the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is left to run its course, or if we confine ourselves to the actions of the international forces in merely supervising the provision of humanitarian and relief supplies to Bosnia and Herzegovina without protecting its people from the massacres they are subjected to and without deterring the aggressors, this tragedy will never end. What is even worse is that it will encourage others who have designs and give free rein to their desire to indulge in aggression and the usurpation of the rights of others with impunity".

(Mr. Samhan, United Arab Emirates)

The distressing situation and bloody tragedy the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been immersed in as a result of the siege under which they have been living for so long, fly in the face of all the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly. With the aim of putting an end to this tragedy, His Highness the Head of State of the United Arab Emirates proposed the use of force in Bosnia and Herzegovina to deter the aggressor and to end the devastation, killing and bloodshed, which cannot be stopped without the dispatch of an international multinational force.

The proposal to use force is, in our view, the only viable option, given the current situation in the region. Failure to use force will tarnish the good name acquired by the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, and weaken the confidence it has earned, two lofty qualities that have been highlighted by the recent changes in the international arena, foremost among which is the end of the cold war.

His Excellency the Head of State set forth the parameters and expected results of the proposal and stated that it would enjoy the acceptance of the majority of the States that denounce aggression and refuse to acknowledge infringements of the rights of others. Destruction must be met with force if the United Nations and Security Council are to maintain their due weight and make their voices heard by all States and peoples. Only States with aggressive intentions, designs and desires or usurp the rights and shed the blood of others will oppose the proposal; only States that have given up on salvation will be against it.

In view of recent developments, the United Arab Emirates calls upon the General Assembly to adopt unanimously a resolution urging the Security Council to use force to deter Serbian aggression and to protect the Republic of Bosnia

(Mr. Samhan, United Arab Emirates)

and Herzegovina from that aggression and its attendant abhorrent practices, foremost among which is the so-called "ethnic cleansing". Pending such action by the Security Council, we feel that the Council is in duty bound to declare that the arms embargo imposed on former Yugoslavia under resolution 713 (1991) does not apply to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, since it is inadmissible to treat the victim on the same footing as the aggressor and impose the same measures on both.

His Excellency the Head of State highlighted that appeal when he said:

> "Under what pretext can arms be withheld from the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina while the aggressor, equipped with the most modern and most lethal of weapons, pursues its aggression against an unarmed people? Such injustice is inadmissible. It is inhuman to allow such a situation to continue. Pending agreement on the dispatch of an international force, I hope that the international community will take urgent steps to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina, for it is unreasonable and unacceptable to deprive a besieged people of food, protection and weapons."

In addition, the United Arab Emirates fully endorses the resolutions and recommendations adopted by the sixth special meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) at Jeddah on 1 and 2 December 1992 with regard to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which include a call to member States to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in exercising its right to individual and collective self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The General Assembly is called upon to speak out forcefully and candidly, unambiguously reject Serbian aggression and urge the Security Council to deal

(Mr. Samhan, United Arab Emirates)

with that aggressor with all the necessary weight and purpose, in accordance with the relevant provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter and the principles of international law which prohibit the use of military force, sanction the aggressor, and prevent him from reaping the fruits of its aggression, including the acquisition of territory by force. Above all, it is not in anybody's interest to adopt a permissive stance towards the perpetration of war crimes and crimes against humanity, such as the crime of "ethnic cleansing".

In this connection, His Excellency the Head of State was most eloquent when he said:

> "The Security Council and the United Nations must take firm and unambiguous positions, particularly in the face of such an awful tragic situation wherein human life has lost its value. This applies to all Muslims and non-Muslims alike, for the protection of human life and human dignity is the right and duty of all. Those who fail to oppose the adoption of a firm policy against aggression will be partners in injustice and aggression. Every human being and every State has a responsibility to combat this crime with all possible means. Those who cannot send troops or equipment should contribute funds. All States should contribute to this endeavour, for to do so is a human obligation."

This is the voice of justice, a call of conscience, an appeal to perform our duty and shoulder our responsibility.

Mr. ELHOUDERI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): Today the General Assembly is considering the tragedy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a question that has shaken the conscience of every human being regardless of origin, race or religion, a question that has become a naked

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

threat to international peace and security in a region that, until recently, was inhabited by brothers living in peace, friendship and serenity and that has now become the scene of brutal armed conflict that continues to claim countless lives, inflict great material damage and lead to the perpetration of intolerable atrocities. The situation has become a matter of concern for all countries, my own included. We have followed with grave concern the events in the region, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we realize the gravity of the situation there. We have sought to establish contacts with all parties to the conflict, who are linked to my country by firm bonds, in an attempt to seek a peaceful solution to their differences and enable them to put an immediate end to the bloodshed and hostilities and to create an atmosphere of stability and security which would guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the region's States and which would not recognize the acquisition of their territories by fo ce.

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

We are deeply saddened and dismayed by the events that have been taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of whose territories continue to witness grave and systematic violations of human rights. Its villages and cities are still targeted by intense, indiscriminate shelling, which has killed and wounded numerous innocent people. The abominable practices of "ethnic cleansing" still prevail. The acts of violence, siege, starvation and concentration camps are worsening day by day. These brutal acts by the Serbian elements have gone on unchecked and have been coupled with the confiscation of the properties of thousands of innocent people among the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were forced to leave their land and to seek refuge in neighbouring countries without any prospects for return, subjected to torture and attacks, and deprived of food, shelter and health care.

The current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina calls for concerted international efforts to find a just and peaceful solution to this question with an immediate halt to the current hostilities. The recurrent attacks by the Serbian militia that have been forcing the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina out of their properties and territories must be stopped. The concentration camps and detention centres must be dismantled. The violation of human rights and the policies of "ethnic cleansing" must be ended. The right of return to their homeland must be guaranteed to the refugees and the displaced. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina must be respected.

In this regard, my delegation commends the efforts by the United Nations and some regional organizations to halt or mitigate the suffering of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those efforts have included a call to all

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

parties to the conflict to halt the hostilities immediately and to seek a peaceful solution to the situation in the region. They have included the provision of protection for relief supplies, the declaration of a no-fly zone in the area, the establishment of a fact-finding Commission to investigate war crimes and the appointment of a Special Rapporteur to investigate human rights violations.

We regret, however, that these measures have not led to any concrete results with regard to putting a stop to the hostilities whose victim is the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or to putting an end to the long drawn-out and increasing suffering of that people. The gravity of the situation makes it imperative to adopt stronger measures and more decisive action with the aim of finding a definitive peaceful solution based on the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, with especial emphasis on respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and national unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation wishes to underscore the need for the international community to respond to th humanitarian needs of the victims of the acts of brutality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to guarantee delivery of such supplies to all parts of the country and to enable humanitarian organizations to reach concentration camps and detention centres without obstruction.

Proceeding from the position of my country, aimed at saving the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina from these tragedies and at mitigating their current plight, my delegation has offered to host 1000 students from Bosnia and Herzegovina to pursue thei studies in Libya at a special school which has beeen fully equipped for this purpose. This offer represents humanitarian

(Mr. Elhouderi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

assistance rendered by the Libyan Arab people to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We have informed the Secretariat of the United Nations of this humanitarian offer.

In conclusion, we appeal from this rostrum to all parties concerned in the former Yugoslavia - especially those parties who bear a greater responsibility - to put an end to the aggression, to establish a ceasefire, to listen to the voice of reason, and to seek to establish peace, security and harmony in the region and solve its problems peacefully, instead of resorting to violence and force. In this regard, we affirm our solidarity with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and our support for the measures the international community takes with the aim of putting an end to the aggression against that country and to find a permanent, just solution to this question.

Mr. CISSÉ (Senegal) (interpretation from French): For the past eight months the international community has been witnessing with horror a people's slow agony. More than 17,000 persons have been killed in Sarajevo, and two-thirds of the territory of a State Member of the United Nations has been occupied, while that State has been abandoned, its hands tied by an arms embargo as it faces blind, barbarous aggression whose nature, methods and objectives take us back to the darkest pages of mankind's history.

The tragic crisis now afflicting Bosnia and Herzegovina not only runs counter to international ethics and the principles on which the United Nations Charter is based, but also could - unless some solution is found - set a precedent capable of seriously undermining the foundations of the new world order we are patiently trying to build in this Organization.

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

As we speak here, the Serbian forces are laying siege to 300,000 starving civilians in Sarajevo and are applying increasing pressure to make the inhabitants leave the city.

Thus, notwithstanding the relevant Security Council and General Assembly decisions on Bosnia and Herzegovina and the other parts of the former Yugoslavia, the Serbs are still committing acts of aggression and massive violations of human rights, thereby continuing to defy the international community with impunity.

Reports reaching us every day on this matter make it quite clear that the sanctions imposed by the Security Council have had scant effect indeed on Serbia and Montenegro, which, on the contrary, seems to be acquiring an increasing number of weapons to use in its attempt to destroy the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its defenceless inhabitants.

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

Mounting tension in the Balkan region is a matter of grave concern that should alert us to the true dimensions of the threat posed to the region by the aggression currently being committed against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is for this reason that we feel that the international community - and in particular the United Nations - must, without delay, take firm steps to uphold the rule of law and justice.

To a large extent, the restoration and preservation of peace in that region depend on the ability of the United Nations to support the struggle being waged by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to preserve its unity, sovereignty and political independence, as well as its territorial integrity. In our opinion, the steady deterioration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the resulting urgent need for effective support for its people's resistance require implementation of the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter - in particular, those of article 42.

It is the duty of the international community to take the necessary steps to guarantee maintenance of the rule of law and justice or to help the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to confront the situation, by equipping it with the means to provide for self-defence, pursuant to article 51 of the Charter.

The policy of ethnic cleansing, the massive and forced displacement of civilians and all other unacceptable violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by the Serbo-Montenegrin regime of Belgrade remind us of past crimes against humanity. All those who commit such crimes at any time must be held individually responsible before an international tribunal.

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

I should like, in conclusion, to pay a tribute to the courage and heroism of the staffs of the United Nations Protection Force, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and all the humanitarian organizations who risk their lives every day to relieve the suffering of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are convinced that, today, international public opinion and all countries that cherish peace and justice are in favour of assisting this humanitarian effort and of supporting any prompt measures by the Security Council to enforce respect for the relevant decisions of the United Nations.

Mr. PIRZADA (Pakistan): As we meet today, the country that is the very subject of our discussion - the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina - is threatened with extinction. This small State, which was admitted to the United Nations not too long ago, has not seen a day of peace, and it continues to be subjected to naked aggression by Serbia, Montenegro and Serbian-led and Serbian-supported elements.

The aggression unleashed against this country has acquired gruesome dimensions that have few parallels in recent history. My delegation listened with deep anguish to the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who dealt at considerable length with the dark acts of inhumanity committed by Serbian and Montenegrin forces in their blind drive to undo his country.

Since the General Assembly last considered this subject the Serbian aggression has not only gained momentum but also become even more brutal. It was our hope that the outcry of international condemnation, coupled with the measures adopted by both the General Assembly and the Security Council against

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

Serbia and Montenegro, would have led to an end to this aggression. Sadly, this has not come to pass, and Serbian and Montenegrin forces continue to defy, flout and challenge world opinion and the opinion of this body.

Serbia and Serbian-led elements have continued their systematic campaign of terrorizing innocent men, women and children. As has been revealed by the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the genocidal practice of "ethnic cleansing" is not the consequence of the conflict, but its objective. Tens of thousands of innocent civilians have been forcibly uprooted and subjected to torture and rape. Others have been maimed and murdered. Many more are languishing in subhuman conditions in Serbian concentration camps. The international community has unanimously condemned the massive violation of human rights in Bosnia and has rejected the Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing as genocidal and as a crime against humanity.

Pakistan welcomed the establishment, pursuant to Security Council resolution 780 (1992), of an impartial Commission of Experts to examine and analyse information on violations of humanitarian law in Bosnia. It is our expectation that the necessary next step will soon be taken, through the establishment of an international war-crimes tribunal, to punish the perpetrators of the crimes against humanity in Bosnia. In our view, there is already substantial evidence to justify the early establishment of such a tribunal. The Serbs must be made to realize that their atrocities against mankind will not go unpunished and that the international community will neither acquiesce in nor condone their crimes.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina demands a three-track approach - an approach at the humanitarian, political and military levels. My delegation

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

has consistently said that urgent and simultaneous action in all three areas is required, that there must be no further delay. Bosnia and Herzegovina is on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe. The Serbs continue to interdict relief supplies. Forced expulsions, coupled with the onset of winter, threaten the lives of 400,000 men, women and children through starvation, disease and exposure. Effective humanitarian assistance requires secure air and land routes. The United Nations force in Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to be strengthened to ensure the delivery of adequate relief supplies to the suffering people of that country.

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

A related measure that would provide some protection to the defenceless civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the temporary creation or establishment of "safety zones". Such a step would facilitate humanitarian assistance and also provide some insulation to the terrorized population from the rigours of the Serbian campaign of genocide. These zones or areas should be provided protection by the peace-keeping forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Pakistan has fully supported international efforts aimed at bringing about an end to this ugly war perpetrated by an expansionist Serbia against neigbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, Serbia continues to flout openly the many decisions of the Security Council. It has, as was expected, backed out of the commitments it made in the context of the London International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. During the debate in the Security Council on Bosnia and Herzegovina on November 13 and 16, 1992, my delegation warned that the Serbs' agreement to the last cease-fire was only tactical and timed to coincide with the Council debate. Our fears proved to be correct. It is obvious that Belgrade and its surrogates remain undeterred in implementing their unholy design of a Greater Serbia while the international community looks on with a sense of helplessness.

We are convinced that the Serbian aggression will continue with impunity until the Security Council displays the requisite political determination to enforce its decisions through the full use of the powers available to it under the Charter, and in particular Chapter VII. The open violations of the no-fly zone provide one such example. Similarly, the economic and trade sanctions imposed against Serbia and Montenegro are being extensively violated despite the naval blockade on the Adriatic Sea. The movement of cargoes along the

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

Danube River continues. The transshipment of goods provides another and greater loophole for circumventing the sanctions regime.

We urge the Security Council to review urgently the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the implementation of its relevant decisions, as well as the agreements reached at the London International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, with a view to taking decisive action, including the use of force under Article 42 of the Charter. If the Security Council is unable to ensure full compliance with its relevant resolutions and reverse all the consequences of the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, it should, in all fairness, afford the Government and the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina the necessary means to exercise their inherent right of self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The arms embargo imposed by Security Council resolution 713 (1991) has in fact deprived the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina of the means of legitimate self-defence. In effect, it equates the victim with the aggressor, while the latter has free access to the weapons of the former Yugoslav army.

It has been argued that a selective lifting of the arms embargo in favour of Bosnia and Herzegovina would fan rather than put out the fire engulfing the region. The Pakistan delegation seriously disagrees with this. Croatia's experience is a case in point. It was only after the Croats were enabled to defend themselves that the Serbs agreed to a cease-fire. Ironically, the fruits of Serbian aggression against Croatia are today United Nations Protected Areas and "pink zones". The United Nations should and must link continued United Nations pressure in those areas to Belgrade's behaviour in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its treatment of minorities in Serbia and Montenegro. The Serbs cannot be rewarded for their aggression.

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

The Serbs remain confident in their belief that neither the Security Council nor any other member of the international community is likely to intervene militarily on behalf of the Bosnian Muslims. This confidence can only encourage them to pursue their present course. As in the case of Somalia, the time has come for a radical change in the approach to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is obvious that the Serbs can be deterred only by force. Appeasement has failed in the past and cannot succeed in the present situation.

In this connection, it is relevant to consider the views of Mr. Milan Kučan, the newly re-elected President of Slovenia, as reported in an article by Anthony Lewis in The New York Times of Friday, 11 December 1992, from which I now quote the relevant extracts:

> "Cease-fires and other steps toward peace have been repeatedly promised - and forgotten.
>
> ...
>
> "Now the time has come to realize that Mr. Milošević is using all the diplomatic attention to gain legitimacy for himself at home. It is time for the United Nations and others to stop trying to wheedle him and instead to condemn his Government unequivocally as a genocidal threat to peace and security.
>
> ...
>
> "Mr. Kučan believes that a majority of the people in Serbia actually oppose the Milošević policy of killing and expelling non-Serbs in Bosnia. But he says that Mr. Milošević has been able to blunt that

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

opposition by pointing to the fact that the United Nations and Western countries continue to recognize and deal with him. Negotiation gives him status.

...

"The next move, therefore, should be for the United Nations, the European Community and the United States to isolate Mr. Milošević: cut off diplomatic relations with his Government, brand it as the aggressor and condemn its murderous actions in Bosnia. In short, treat the Milošević regime as an international pariah." (The New York Times, 11 December 1992, p. A39)

It is not only the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the fate of its people that hang in the balance but also the fate of the region in the post-cold-war era. The outcome of the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina will have an impact on developments in Kosovo, the Sanjak, Vojvodina and Macedonia. The present situation carries with it the portents of a wider regional conflagration. If the international community fails to reverse effectively all the consequences of the aggression and the Serbian genocidal practice of "ethnic cleansing", it will seriously undermine the ability of the United Nations to act in other areas of potential conflict. If this aggression remains unchecked, the small and weaker States cannot be expected to retain confidence in the United Nations system of collective security and, above all, in the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter. At the same time, this would only serve to encourage Powers with expansionist ambitions and aggressive designs to follow their grand designs with impunity.

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

My delegation fully supports the resolution on Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted at the sixth extraordinary Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Jedda earlier in the month, and it would urge the international community to extend its political and material backing to that resolution, so as to ensure the solution by appropriate measures of the tragic crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkans.

The Pakistan delegation fully supports the draft resolution that will be considered by the Assembly on this agenda item. The measures proposed in it reflect the gravity of the situation on the ground. The international community cannot afford to hesitate any further. We are confident that the draft resolution will receive widespread support.

(Mr. Pirzada, Pakistan)

In conclusion, the Pakistan delegation expresses its deep appreciation for the untiring efforts of the Secretary-General, of the two Co-Chairmen of the International Conference, Mr. Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, and of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights. I should also like to pay a special tribute to the courageous men and women of the United Nations Protection Force and to the personnel of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and of other humanitarian organizations for their dedication and commitment.

Mr. TÜRK (Slovenia): The General Assembly is meeting today to discuss the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, this gathering should represent much more than just a meeting or a discussion. We are here to reflect upon and propose how to confront the evil of aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina. The stakes are historically high because, in words borrowed from a recent article written by an excellent commentator,

> "the failure to confront this evil is worse than a blunder; it is an abdication of our humanity".

The need to confront this evil requires accuracy: intellectual, moral and political accuracy. Tens of thousands have died in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The vast majority of them were civilians. This permits no obfuscation of the nature of that war and as to the responsibility of those who triggered it.

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is neither civil strife nor ethnic conflict; it is a war for territory, a war premeditated with the ultimate objective of the creation of a "Greater Serbia". The goal of ethnic

(Mr. Türk, Slovenia)

homogeneity and the method of so-called ethnic cleansing - that is, the genocidal practice of the extermination of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina - epitomize the most abominable aspect of that war of aggression.

The consequences are extremely grave, both in human and in political terms: 128,000 people have died, 170,000 are missing and 300,000 have been wounded; more than 3 million people have had to flee since the beginning of the war in the summer of 1991; they are now refugees or are internally displaced in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In political terms, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina represents a war of aggression against a State Member of the United Nations. What we are witnessing today is the clear and present danger of the annihilation of a State Member of the United Nations and of an entire people, the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Aggression against that country already represents a threat to international peace and security and could produce a cataclysmic situation in the Balkan region. The political consequences of such a development would be extremely grave.

It is often said that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina has given rise to a situation of a certain complexity. In some respects this may be true. However, it would be morally wrong and politically short-sighted if the complexities involved were to be allowed to prevent effective international action. The pretext of complexity may seem to be a convenient way of avoiding difficult decisions and actions but, as history has shown, resorting to such pretexts only postpones decisions and makes their implementation more costly, while human suffering continues.

(Mr. Türk, Slovenia)

Intellectual and moral accuracy and, above all, the requirements of political responsibility compel us to admit that the international efforts to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina have so far yielded unsatisfactory results. The report (A/47/747) prepared by the Secretary-General for the present discussion sadly reflects that reality and contains no proposal for dealing with this situation in the future.

For those of us who have always advocated resolute humanitarian action supported by military force when necessary, the feeling of disappointment today is no less profound than it is for those who have relied solely on the force of words. It has to be admitted that the hopes created at the London Conference have largely evaporated in the face of continuing aggression. The talks in Geneva seem unproductive and less and less meaningful as an instrument for making peace; to the contrary, those and other talks are being misused as a source of legitimacy for the Government that is, by far, most responsible for the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Partnership in talks and the absence of effective measures give that Government an apparent status of legitimacy and diminish the potential of its domestic opposition. The international community must give this problem the most serious consideration.

The General Assembly must very carefully and seriously consider questions concerning the future course of action with respect to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact that that situation is being continuously considered by the Security Council and that economic sanctions have been imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - Serbia and Montenegro - that is on those responsible for the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, does not make

(Mr. Türk, Slovenia)

this task of the General Assembly any less compelling. The Council's responsibility in matters of international peace and security is primary, but not exclusive - something that must be particularly borne in mind in situations characterized by a lack of results. Hence the particular importance of the present debate by the General Assembly.

What is to be done? Mr. Milan Kucan, the President of Slovenia, in his letter dated 25 November 1992 addressed to the Secretary-General, reiterated the need for immediate and sustained action with a view to creating an appropriate safe environment for humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Resolute action is needed to enforce earlier decisions of the Security Council concerning humanitarian assistance, and to protect civilians.

How are we to approach this task? Enforcement of the prohibition of military flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina should be the first, and an immediate, step in that direction. Other steps, including in particular effective protection of humanitarian convoys and the establishment of safe areas for humanitarian purposes, should follow without delay.

The Secretary-General's report on the safe areas envisaged in Security Council resolution 787 (1992) of 16 November 1992 is, in view of the circumstances, already overdue. Slovenia believes that the international community should declare as safe areas at least five areas that are currently under attack, areas with large concentrations of civilians, including refugees. They are the areas of Bihac, Travnik, Tuzla, Gorazde and, above

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all, Sarajevo, the martyr capital city of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Attacks on those areas must be declared prohibited, and the prohibition must be effectively enforced.

That approach certainly entails a certain amount of risk. However, it should be kept in mind that a resolute stand and a readiness, should it become necessary, to use force within the framework of the United Nations Charter would create a new situation, one that would show that aggression does not pay and that the international community is ready and willing to enforce its decisions. Such a signal would have a powerful deterrent effect on the forces of aggression.

(Mr. Türk, Slovenia)

We have concentrated on those aspects of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the necessary international actions that, in our opinion, are most required at this stage. We are, however, fully aware that the situation may require other measures envisaged in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. The regime of sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro should remain and must be implemented.

The General Assembly should also consider all other political dimensions of the war against Bosnia and Herzegovina. That war started as a result of the situation created by the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. Now, that former Member State of the United Nations has dissolved and has ceased to exist. The General Assembly should take cognizance of this fact and should act accordingly. The membership of former Yugslavia in the United Nations should be terminated on the grounds that that former State Member of the United Nations has ceased to exist.

While Slovenia has always clearly expressed its views and proposals, we will support even more vigorous action than is being proposed in this statement should the competent organs of the United Nations so decide. This is the time for action. Let the United Nations demonstrate its ability to live up to the challenge at hand.

Mr. HALACHEV (Bulgaria): The Bulgarian delegation is gravely concerned at the further aggravation of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Tens of thousands of deaths, millions of displaced persons and refugees, massive and gross violations of human rights, tremendous destruction and spreading humanitarian drama are only a few of the horrible consequences of this tragic war.

Bulgaria was among the first to call attention to the abhorrent practice of "ethnic cleansing", a policy that violates the basic standards of human

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behaviour. These inhumane crimes and other grave breaches of international humanitarian law committed in the former Yugoslavia should be unequivocally condemned and steps should be undertaken to ensure the prosecution of those individually responsible. In order to provide protection to the civilian population and ease the suffering of innocent people, the development of safe areas for humanitarian purposes envisaged in Security Council resolution 787 (1992) should be pursued without delay.

The continuation of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, especially in view of the potential but tangible danger that the fighting may spread to other parts of the former Yugoslavia, thus affecting not only the Balkans but Europe as a whole.

Despite the measures undertaken in the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, as well as under numerous United Nations resolutions, the crisis continues to deteriorate. A renewed and resolute impetus to the process of political settlement is needed. In view of this, Bulgaria has proposed that a meeting of the International Conference be convened urgently at the foreign-minister level to consider all aspects of the situation in the former Yugoslavia. We welcome the decision to hold a ministerial meeting of the Steering Committee in Geneva on 16 December. It is our firm belief that a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis can be achieved only in the framework of appropriate international mechanisms involving the efforts of the United Nations, the European Community (EC) and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

We fully support the political process of the London Conference aimed at achieving a settlement founded on the principles of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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We reaffirm our position that any territorial gains by force are unacceptable and we call for a speedy agreement on the constitutional arrangements for Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of the draft outline proposed by the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee on 27 October. Full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions and with all decisions of the London Conference is imperative.

My country highly appreciates the efforts of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) aimed at containing the escalation of the conflict, relieving the sufferings of the civilian population and facilitating the supply of humanitarian assistance. As for any decision implying use of military force to ensure the implementation of United Nations resolutions, we would like to underscore that the responsibility for taking such action must lie with the United Nations Security Council. In this connection let me reiterate our position that Bulgaria will not take part in or provide its territory for the purposes of any such operation. We urge all other Balkan States to adopt the same position.

Bulgaria considers the arms embargo imposed by Security Council resolution 713 (1991) and the mandatory economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, now Serbia and Montenegro, to be important aspects of the overall efforts of the international community to bring the Yugoslav crisis to an end. The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria has adopted all the necessary measures and is continuing to take further steps to ensure full compliance with the provisions of these resolutions. We actively cooperate with the international community in the efforts to ensure effective implementation of the sanctions. Among other things, Sanctions Assistance Missions are operating on Bulgarian territory.

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At the same time, we should keep in mind the negative impact these sanctions have on States that observe them strictly, in particular the countries of the region. The United Nations has to undertake appropriate measures to alleviate their special economic problems. To this effect we have suggested a number of steps to be considered, inter alia, the establishment of a United Nations voluntary compensation fund for the purpose of assisting the States most affected by the implementation of the sanctions, the adoption by the Security Council of an appeal to all States and relevant international organizations to determine the most appropriate means of economic, financial and other assistance and the establishment of close cooperation between the United Nations and the Sanctions Assistance Missions of the EC and CSCE.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform members that tomorrow afternoon, immediately following the conclusion of the debate on agenda item 143, the General Assembly will resume its consideration of three reports of the First Committee and take decisions on the draft resolution in the report on agenda item 59 (A/47/689); on draft resolution E in the report on agenda item 61 (A/47/691; and on draft resolution A in the report on agenda item 62 (A/47/692).

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.